

to match their skills, and people who feel the burden of outdated policies that are diminishing opportunities in the workplace and leaving them torn between the demands of work and family.

Republicans are committed to doing everything we can to deliver relief and innovative new ideas to help these Americans. I hope President Obama and Washington Democrats will at some point here finally join us in the effort.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 11:45 a.m. with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ENZI. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SPORTSMEN'S AMENDMENTS

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, we are back for another week of work, but the play-book hasn't changed.

Once again the majority leader has prevented 98 Senators from offering amendments to improve a bill he chose for us to debate. I would like to speak for a few moments about some of the amendments the Democratic leader prevented us from voting on this week.

First, I have been working on amendments with Senators BENNET, FLAKE, RISCH, SESSIONS, and THUNE to allow bows and archery equipment to be transported through the national parks. This bipartisan effort is necessary because some bow hunters need to travel across national parks to get to land where they intend to hunt.

It is also important for our archery competitors who currently have to go out of their way to avoid national parks to get to their tournaments. A lot of people don't realize that Yellowstone National Park, which is in the upper left-hand corner of Wyoming, is about the size of Connecticut. To get to Idaho, sometimes you have to go 250 miles out of your way if you can't go through the park. There is a lot of competition between Wyoming and Idaho when it comes to archery and

vice versa. The same can happen getting into Montana.

This is just a commonsense amendment because it provides parity for bows and firearms. In 2009 Congress passed a law to prevent the right of individuals to bear arms in units of the national park system and the National Wildlife Refuge System. This body considered it a commonsense provision before. Language on this issue was included in the Sportsmen's Act of 2012, S. 3525, but now the Senate won't even get a chance to vote on whether to add this language to the Bipartisan Sportsmen's Act of 2014. This is the appropriate place for sportsmen's issues to be brought up.

Second, I offered an amendment with Senators LEE and THUNE to ensure that those traveling with a properly secured knife are not prosecuted under local or State laws which banned certain knives. This amendment is necessary because there is a broad patchwork of State and local laws regulating knife possession.

For example, 36 States allow civilian possession of automatic knives to varying degrees. But there are no restrictions at all in 22 States, and in some States possession is a serious crime. This can be incidental, again, just passing through a State.

The current situation with knives is similar to the circumstances that existed for gun owners before the passage of the Firearm Owners Protection Act of 1986. That law protects law-abiding gun owners from an inconsistent patchwork of laws, and my amendment provides parity between knife and gun owner. This commonsense amendment uses language similar to that used in the 1986 law.

I have also filed an amendment with Senators BARRASSO, CRAPO, HATCH, LEE, MURKOWSKI, and RISCH to require the Department of Interior to suspend for 10 years the listing decision in States with approved or endorsed sage-grouse management plans. Wyoming has an endorsed and an approved plan, and sage-grouse is coming back. A new report on numbers just showed an increase. The amendment allows States to manage and conserve sage-grouse in a manner that protects their jurisdiction over State wildlife and takes into account local stakeholders.

I believe it is related to the underlying bill because of the substantial impact a sage-grouse listing would have on sporting and recreation in Western States. Incidentally, even though they say there is a sage-grouse problem, the bag limits for hunting them have not gone down.

I have also cosponsored some amendments that would improve this bill. One of these amendments by Senator BARRASSO would prevent the EPA from regulating all bodies of water—even ones that are dried up, even ones that are seasonal—no matter how small and regardless of whether the water is on public or on private property.

Mark Twain once said: "[In the West] Whiskey is for drinking; Water is for fighting over."

So for States such as Wyoming, water is scarce, and we try to save every drop. One-size-fits-all Federal control like the EPA wants to impose won't work, but Senator BARRASSO won't get a vote on his amendment.

Another amendment by Senator WICKER, which I have cosponsored, would allow folks to carry firearms on Corps of Engineers recreational property. This is another parity amendment. But in this case, we would allow law-abiding gun owners to carry firearms on Corps land just as they can carry firearms on national park and National Wildlife Refuge lands, but Senator WICKER won't get a vote on his amendment.

I am also supporting an amendment from Senator TESTER to make cabin user fees more affordable and predictable, allowing families to keep their cabins on Forest Service land on which some have been for generations. Wyoming cabin owners shouldn't have to worry about the Forest Service trying to drive them off with ever-increasing fees—sometimes a 300-percent increase in a single year.

Incidentally, the Federal Government pays taxes in lieu of private ownership of the land. Those don't go up by 300 percent. It seems to me that if the value of the land went up by 300 percent, the Federal Government's payment in lieu of taxes would go up by the same amount. It doesn't happen. Wyoming cabin owners shouldn't have to worry about the Forest Service trying to drive them off with ever-increasing fees.

This amendment provides a consistent, fiscally responsible formula for how the fees are calculated so families can spend more time enjoying the outdoors instead of worrying about the uncertainty of next year's fees, but Senator TESTER won't get a vote on his amendment.

These aren't the only good amendments to this bill. There have been 80 amendments filed on this bill—about a third filed by the majority party. Many of the amendments are bipartisan, but it sounds as if only the one chosen by the majority leader is going to get a vote.

I am sad to say no one should be surprised by this because it has become par for the course. In 2005 and 2006 the Senate voted on almost 700 amendments on the Senate floor. In 2011 and 2012 it was about half that, around 350 amendments. In the past year the majority leader has allowed only 11 Senate Republican amendments. Let me repeat that. In the past year the majority leader has allowed votes on only 11 Senate Republican amendments. Over that same period of time the House has voted on 169 Democratic amendments. How can the House, which has more constraint than the Senate, have that many more votes for the minority party—169 to our 11? The majority

party in the Senate isn't faring any better. I am told the majority leader has only allowed his own party to have seven amendments voted on since July of last year. In fact, my friends on the other side of the aisle haven't gotten a vote on one of their amendments in over 100 days—and they are in control.

To prevent us from offering amendments, the majority leader has used a tactic called filling the amendment tree. In the last 8 years he has used this tactic 90 times. By comparison, the last six majority leaders combined only filled the tree 40 times in over 16 years. So the last 8 years, 90 times; the previous 16 years, 40 times.

Almost half of the Senate has been here less than 6 years. Forty-five of the 100 Senators are in their first term, so they may think this is the way the Senate does business. I say to those Senators, there is a better way. We need to be able to vote on amendments. We need the bills to go to committee. We need to have bills come to the floor. We need amendments both places. All 100 Members of the Senate should have an opportunity to improve the bills we consider because each of us looks at every proposal from a different point of view and different experience. When all the decisions are made by the majority leader, the vast majority of Americans get shortchanged. This won't change unless those who are here exercise our rights.

It is time for the 99 Senators who are being denied the opportunity to represent their constituents to stand up to the leader and insist on amendments. We should all demand that we be allowed to do our jobs. That will show up in votes, and it has shown up in votes. When our side doesn't get amendments, we don't let the bill pass. We have that capability, and the minority needs that capability in order to get control of situations such as this.

We need to be able to vote on amendments. It has been the process of this body for the history of the United States, with unlimited debate in the Senate. Occasionally, when the debate has gone on for 2 or 3 days or 2 or 3 weeks, there has been the exercise we see here but not at the start of a bill so that no amendments can be voted on.

It doesn't take very long to vote if you get to vote. But what we are going through is a process of negotiations to see if the majority leader can pick the votes for the minority party. That is not right. That hasn't happened, and we don't intend to let it happen.

It is time that we have our amendments, particularly amendments that are relevant to the bill. This is the sportsmen's bill. I am talking about the right to take archery equipment through a national park. We can do that with guns, but we can't do that with bows? Some of those parks are pretty big, and you have to go 250 miles out of the way to get around them. That shouldn't be imposed on sportsmen. They ought to have the right to do that, and we are going to be denied

that vote and all of the others that I mentioned this morning.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and reserve the remainder of our time.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, I rise to speak about our Nation's broken criminal justice system, a system that has taken an unimaginable and I believe unsustainable toll on our Nation.

The United States remarkably is home to between 4 and 5 percent of the entire globe's population, but we have 25 percent of the world's prison population. This phenomenon is unacceptable, that the land of the free would have 25 percent of the globe's imprisoned people. What is startling about that is the majority of those people are nonviolent offenders. In fact, the majority are nonviolent drug offenders.

This phenomenon has largely emerged since around 1980, a period during which the Federal prison population has grown nearly tenfold. Since 1980 we have seen a 10-time increase in our prison population. Again, if we were locking up violent offenders, people who are terrorizing our streets or inflicting vicious and violent harm on our communities, then ridding our streets of such dangerous criminals would be understandable and it would be a price worth paying. But that is not the story of this unbelievable explosion of our Federal prisons and our Nation's incarcerated people. The reality is that nearly three-quarters of Federal prisoners are nonviolent and have no history of violence whatsoever.

What is worse and what is anguishing is that once they are convicted of a crime, American citizens then face daunting obstacles to successfully rejoin society, to being able to raise their family, put food on the table, provide for themselves. As a result of that, our State and Federal prison exits have now become revolving doors, with two of every three ex-offenders getting rearrested within 5 years. Two-thirds of those nonviolent folks leaving our prisons come back within 5 years.

When ex-offenders return to prison again and again, they are not just paying a price; we all are paying the price. We are contributing so much of our national treasure to rearresting the same people over and over, to reincarcerating the same people over and over. A recent Pew report concluded that if just 10 States cut their recidivism just 10 percent, it would save taxpayers \$470 million—money this Nation urgently could use either to keep in the pockets of taxpayers or invest in things such as lowering the cost of college or in our roads and bridges or our crumbling infrastructure.

As hard-working, taxpaying Americans have increased the fund for our prisons, funding more and more, there have been fewer and fewer resources left for these other crucial parts of our society—fewer resources for law enforcement, fewer resources for rehabilitative programs, fewer resources for

proven investments in children that help prevent crime in the first place. The result has been a cycle of spending and incarceration that has led to the ballooning of this Federal prison bureaucracy, more than one-quarter of a trillion dollars a year from our economy going to unproductive and even counterproductive uses.

Our country's misguided criminal justice policies place an economic drag on local communities and on our Nation's global competitiveness. Remember, if we are putting 25 percent of the globe's prison population in our American prisons, paying the price for that, our competitive democracies, our competitive economies aren't paying that price, we are paying this egregious price, and it is not making us any more safe. In fact, I would say it is making us less safe as a community.

Many of my colleagues in this body, I am proud to say, recognize the urgent need for reform and have already put forth pieces of legislation that seek to improve various parts of this broken system. I am grateful and I applaud the bipartisan efforts that exist in this body amongst my colleagues—Senators LEAHY, FLAKE, DURBIN, LEE, WHITEHOUSE, LANDRIEU, FRANKEN, and others—who stand up to say: We have to save taxpayer dollars, we have to elevate human potential, and we have to make our streets safer.

So to build off the momentum of these leaders in the Senate, I join with Senator RAND PAUL to introduce today the RECORD Expungement Designed to Enhance Employment—or REDEEM—Act. This bipartisan legislation will establish much needed, sensible, pragmatic reforms that keep kids out of an adult system in the first place, protect their privacy so a youthful mistake can remain a youthful mistake and not haunt young people throughout their lives, and help make it actually less likely that low-level nonviolent offenders reoffend.

Among other measures, our bill incentivizes States to raise the age of original jurisdiction for criminal courts to 18 years old. Trying juveniles who have committed low-level, nonviolent crimes as adults is counterproductive. They don't emerge from prison reformed and ready to reintegrate into a high school. The criminal record they have won't help them as they try to get a job. We need a system that treats juveniles toughly but fairly and with an eye toward productive adulthood, with an eye toward restorative justice.

For kids in the dozen States that treat 17- and even 16-year-olds as adults, no longer would it be likely that getting into a scuffle at school would result in an adult record that could follow an individual for the rest of their life, restricting access to a college degree, limiting employment prospects, and increasing the likelihood of engaging in further criminal activity. It is time that we empower our children to succeed, not undermine their long-term prospects for life's success.

The REDEEM Act also enhances Federal juvenile record confidentiality provisions and provides for automatic expungement of records for kids who commit nonviolent crimes before they turn 15 and automatic sealing of records for those who commit nonviolent crimes after they turn 15.

It will also ban the very cruel and counterproductive practice of juvenile solitary confinement that can have immediate and long-term detrimental effects on youth detainee mental and physical health. In fact, the majority of suicides by juveniles in prisons happens by young people who are in solitary confinement. Other nations even consider it torture.

For adults, this legislation offers the first broad-based Federal path to the sealing of criminal records. A person who commits a nonviolent crime will be able to petition a court and make his or her case.

Furthermore, employers requesting a background check from the Federal Bureau of Investigation will be provided with only relevant and accurate information thanks to a provision that will protect job applicants by improving the quality of the Bureau's background check.

Think about this: 17 million background checks were done by the FBI last year, many of them for private providers, and upward of half of them were inaccurate or incomplete, often causing people to lose a job, miss an economic opportunity, and be trapped with few options to address the basic economic security that could lead someone to reoffend in order to feed a child. The REDEEM Act lifts a ban on receiving Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program, or SNAP, benefits. These benefits were conceived in a way that should empower people when they have to leave, and those convicted of drug use or possession having paid their dues now have a path to the reinstatement of those benefits so that they can get their lives together so they can be empowered and successful.

Taken together, these measures will help keep kids who get in trouble out of a lifetime of crime and help adults who commit nonviolent crimes become more self-reliant and less likely to reoffend.

The time to act is now. We cannot afford to let our criminal justice system continue to grow at the rate that it is. We cannot afford to sap billions of taxpayer dollars from a broken system that is locking people up and then doing nothing to empower them to succeed. We are wasting human potential and human productivity. We are hurting our economy, and by trapping people without options, we often end up making our communities less safe.

We have seen how other individual States are doing things to address this issue and are actually lowering recidivism and lowering their prison population and on top of it lowering actual crime in their States. It is time that the Federal Government act to do the same.

I urge my colleagues to support the REDEEM Act so we can make our communities safer and stronger and truly be a nation that savors and values freedom and empowers its citizens to live productive, strong lives of contribution.

Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I note the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican whip is recognized.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I would ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SPRING, TEXAS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, before I begin my prepared remarks today I want to offer my sympathy to the community of Spring, TX. Last night in this quiet suburban area north of Houston they experienced the horrific murders of six people. It is reported that four of these people who were killed were young people. As we move forward in the days and weeks ahead I hope we will keep these victims and the community in our thoughts and prayers.

BORDER CRISIS

Mr. CORNYN. Shifting to a different part of my State where they are experiencing another type of crisis, every day this week I have come to the floor and spoken on President Obama's refusal to travel to the southern border of Texas where a humanitarian crisis continues to unfold. Those aren't just my words; those are the President's words—a humanitarian crisis.

As I have said before, the President has been in Dallas; he has been in Austin, where he spent the night last night; and he is there this morning speaking, reportedly, on the economy. Why he persists in his refusal to travel to the border really is beyond my imagination. I just don't understand it. The fact that the President has himself described it as a humanitarian crisis makes this even more strange.

People can infer whatever they want to about his potential motivations. I don't know whether it means he doesn't really understand it, whether his handlers have kept him in the bubble so much that simply the facts are not getting through to him or whether he is surrounded by political advisers who say: This is going to be a political liability for you, Mr. President. Don't travel there. If you show up and have your picture taken with these children who are traveling by the tens of thousands unaccompanied from Central America to Mexico, you will own the problem. I don't know whether that is the advice he is getting. Surely it cannot be that he doesn't care.

But I will tell you that many of my constituents—Republicans and Democrats alike—and many of my colleagues in the Congress are wondering: Why would the President show such little respect for what the communities along the border are experiencing as they try to deal with this humanitarian crisis? Why would the President show such little respect for the Border Patrol, FEMA, and other Federal actors that are trying to help these communities deal with this crisis? It just does not add up.

Since the President so stubbornly refuses to visit the border even though he is in Texas and has been there for the last 2 days, people have asked me: Well, if the President showed up, what would he see?

First of all, he would learn this crisis is in large part a product of the President's own policy judgments, particularly starting with the ICE memo in 2011, the so-called Morton memo No. 1, then the Morton memo No. 2, and then the deferred action Executive order saying that certain young people would never be returned to their country of origin but the President will act alone to defer action against them.

Then there is the continued discussion the President has here in Washington that says he wants to go even further. So I think one of the things the President would learn is that people actually pay attention to what he is saying. The impression is that he is not going to faithfully execute the law.

So the children continue to come, and they will continue to come until we fix the problem. The President has to be an important part of that solution.

As I have said before, these young children traveled through some of the most dangerous territory on the planet, because the smuggling corridors are controlled by cartels such as the Zetas and these cartels are in the business of crime—smuggling people, drugs, weapons, you name it—smuggling women for sex slavery and human trafficking. They don't really care about the human element. They care about the money. Migrants who travel across Mexico from Central America are subjected to rape and kidnapping—where they are held for ransom so their relatives will pay off the cartels to let them go and continue their journey. We don't know how many of the children that start this long journey from Central America—some 1,200 miles from Guatemala City to McAllen, TX, alone—how many of them die in the process and never make it. So the 52,000-plus so far who have been detained at our southwestern border since October are the ones who made the trip successfully. We don't know how many children and their parents have died in the process.

I do know—having traveled to Brooks County, Texas—that I have seen some of the grave sites of unknown migrants who have actually died trying to get through—to get past the Border Patrol